

SIKH GURŪS

CONCEPTS AND CULTURE



Foreword

As compared to other religions of the world, Sikh religion is new and unique. It flourished with the arrival of Gurū Nānak Dev in this world, and the nine successor Gurūs contributed a lot in the propagation of its theology, ethics and the doctrines of equality, freedom and brotherhood. This religion is not only unique because of its newness, but due to the fact that it made the people conscious about the difficulties of the modern age and established the concept of egalitarian human society. The effort made by the Gurūs was like a revolution for the suffering humanity and the way of living put forth by it, broke all the barriers of caste and creed; thus embracing the people from all walks of life without any discrimination. The practical objectives accomplished by the Gurūs for establishing unity among the people could not be seen anywhere else in the society.

Instead of believing the religion to be a part of one's life, Gurū Sāhib made it a tool for guidance in every walk of social life. Gurū Arjan Dev Ji presented the religion in the spiritual as well as in the form of virtuous conduct and stated :

Sarab dharma mahi sresāṭa dharamu. Hari ko nāmu japi nirmala karama.

Of all religions, the best religion is to chant the Name of the Lord and maintain pure conduct.

(SGGS pg. 266)

Religion affects the life of every individual and that is why this newly defined form of religion worked immensely in bringing the people of all lifestyles nearer to each other. For the propagation and application of religion among the entire humanity, different institutions were established.

As the Sikh society is developing and acquiring new heights, there has been a rise in the queries regarding the Sikh religion in the people residing in the country and overseas as well. Besides this, it is true that till date, the attempts made to establish the distinct identity of Sikhism have been incomplete. That's why there were attacks on the Sikh community in the western world, misunderstanding them as Arabs. Much has been written about the Sikh religion, but due to the lack of time and effort, the authenticated academic information present in the books has not reached the common person.

To provide the basic information about the Sikh religion, this book prepared by Dr. Paramvir Singh briefly describes the Sikh history, ideology and its institutions, from which every reader can feel benefitted profusely. The detail presented in this small book is brief, but significant. No endeavor has been made to find something altogether new in this work and instead attempt has been made to provide authenticated and meaningful information about the Gurūs and their tenets. Sikh Foundation has published this book and the work in hand provides reliable information about Sikh faith, its concepts, culture and the Sikh tradition.

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SIKH GURŪS, Concepts and Culture

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Gurū

Gurū means a spiritual guide or preceptor. He is the nucleus of Sikh way of life.

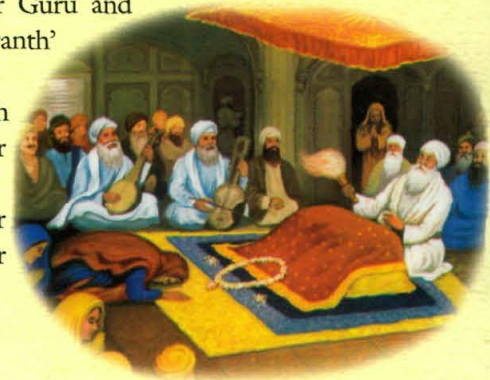
The word 'Gurū' has been used in Gurmat for the Lord Almighty. The Supreme Being in the form of Gurū guides a Sikh, leads him toward the religious pursuit and blesses him with the knowledge of spiritual upliftment.

There have been Ten Gurūs, beginning from Gurū Nānak Dev Jī to Gurū Gobind Singh Jī. A Sikh regards all the Gurūs as the effulgence of one light and one single entity. This jot or light is in the form of Shabad Gurū. That's why 'Shabad' present in Gurū Granth Sāhib is referred to as the everlasting Gurū of the Sikhs.

Gurū Nānak Sāhib laid the foundation of Sikh religion who revealed the Shabad in the form of Gurū. In 1708 AD, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī bowed before the Shabad Gurū, Gurū Granth Sāhib, instructed the Sikhs to revere it as their Gurū and ordained that in future, the light of Gurū would be in 'Granth' and form in the 'Panth'.

The teachings of the Gurūs, included in Gurū Granth Sāhib, are called Gurbāñī. Therefore, Gurbāñī is our Gurū.

Gurū is like a river of flowing waves of pure water and the Shabad or Gurbāñī, included in it, is the tool for the purity of the mind.



Sikh

Any human being who faithfully believes in

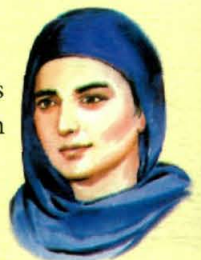
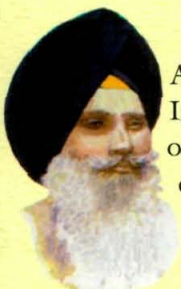
- * One Immortal Being,
 - * Ten Gurūs, from Gurū Nānak Dev Jī to Gurū Gobind Singh Jī,
 - * The Gurū Granth Sāhib,
 - * The utterances and teachings of the ten Gurūs,
 - * The baptism bequeathed by the tenth Gurū, and
 - * Who does not owe allegiance to any other religion,
- is a Sikh.

Literal meaning of a Sikh is the learner, who follows the teachings of his preceptor, and lives the life according to the tenets of the Gurū.

- A Sikh :
- * Worships only the One Timeless Being and no god or goddess.
 - * Regards the ten Gurūs as the effulgence of one light and one single entity.
 - * Lives in consonance with Gurū's tenets.

A Sikh's life has two aspects : individual or personal and corporate or Panthic.

In complete form, Sikh is one different separate community, which has its own language, own culture, own history, own religious concepts and its own distinctive and unique identity.



Gurū Nānak Dev Ji

- Parkāsh : In 1469 AD at Rāi Bhoi kī Talwandī (Now Nankāṇā Sāhib, Pakistan)
- Parents : Mātā Triptā and Mehtā Kalyāṇ Dās Ji
- Sister : Bebe Nānakī Ji
- Gurū ke Mahal : Mātā Sulakhṇī Ji
- Sāhibzāde : Bābā Sri Chand and Bābā Lakhmī Dās Ji
- First Sermon : In 1499 AD while living at Sultānpur Lodhī, one morning Gurū Sāhib went to the rivulet Vein to take the bath, where He got immersed in Nām-Simran and was blessed with Divine Realization. Coming out of it, He gave His first sermon to the people 'Na ko Hindū na Musalmān' Neither there is any Hindū nor Muslim, means all are children of One God.
- Journeys : Gurū Nānak Sāhib undertook four journeys (Udāsīs) for the welfare of all, towards different directions. He travelled extensively throughout the Indian sub-continent and apart from India he visited Sri Lanka, Mecca (Saudi Arabia), Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. He travelled for almost 22 years. The purpose of these journeys was the welfare of humanity and to have a dialogue with other religious communities to reveal the way of truth.
- Companion : During these journeys, his companion was Bhāi Mardānā; three Shabads are inscribed under his name in Gurū Granth Sāhib
- Bāṇī : 974 hymns recited in 19 rāgas
- Vārs : 3 - in Mājh, Āsā and Malār rāgas
- Main Bāṇīs : Japu, Āsā kī Vār, Pahare, Alāhaṇiā, Kuchajī, Suchajī, Paṭi, Thitī, Ārtī, Dakhaṇī Oankār, Bārah Māhā, Sidh Gostī
- Message : Recite Lord's Name, Do earnest earning and Share it with others
- Contributions : * Establishment of Saṅgat and Laṅgar institutions
* Choosing the leader from the Saṅgat on the basis of qualities
* Collecting Bāṇī and giving it the shape of a Pothī
- City Founded : Gurū Nānak Sāhib founded Kartārpur, a city on the banks of river Rāvi in 1504 AD.
- Contemporary Rulers : Bahilol Lodhī (r. 1451-89 AD), Sikandar Lodhī (r. 1489-1517 AD), Ibrāhīm Lodhī (r. 1517-30 AD), Bābar (r. 1526-30 AD), Humāyun (r. 1530-40 AD)
- Entrustment of Gurgaddī : Transformed Bhāi Lehṇā as 'Aṅgad' and installed him as the second Gurū of the Sikhs
- Jotī-jot : In 1539 AD at Kartārpur on the banks of river Rāvi (now in Pakistan)



Kalijugu bābe tārīā sati nāmu paṛhi mantru suṇāiā.

Kali tārāṇ Gurū Nānaku āiā.

Bābā Nānak rescued this dark age and recited

‘Satnām’ mantra for one and all.

Gurū Nānak came to redeem the Kaliyug.

(Bhāi Gurdās Ji, Vār 1 Paurī 23)

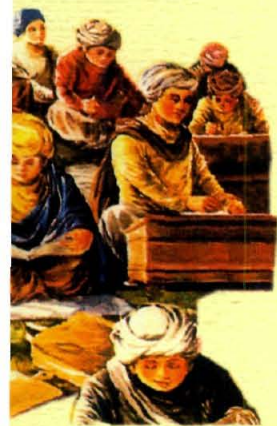


Gurū Aṅgad Dev Jī

Parkāsh	: In 1504 AD at Matte dī Sarāi, district Firozpur, Panjāb
Parents	: Mātā Rām Kaur and Bhāi Pherū Mall Jī
Gurū ke Mahal	: Mātā Khīvī Jī
Sāhibzāde	: Bābā Dātū and Bābā Dāsū Jī
Sāhibzādīān	: Bībī Anokhī and Bībī Amro Jī
Accession to Gurgaddī	: In 1539 AD at Kartārpur on the banks of river Rāvi
Bāṇī	: 63 Salokas
Contributions	* Ratification of Gurmukhī script * Preservation of Gurbāṇī * Establishment of academic and physical training schools * Respect and recognition of the status of women in Sikh religion by appointing Mātā Khīvī as incharge of the Laṅgar
Message	: Selfless service and complete surrender to the Will of God
Contemporary Rulers	: Emperor Humāyun (r. 1530-40 AD), Sher Shāh Surī (r. 1542-45 AD), Islām Shāh (r. 1545-53 AD)
Entrustment of Gurgaddī	: Nominated Gurū Amar Dās Jī as the third Gurū of the Sikhs
Joti-jot	: In 1552 AD at Khaḍūr Sāhib, Panjāb

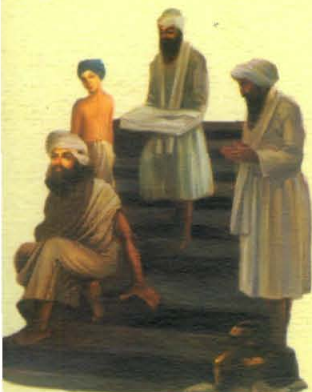
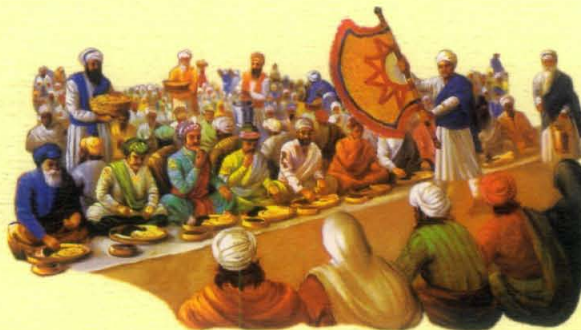


Lahane dī pherāiai Nānakā dohī khaṭiai.
 Joti oha jugatī sāi sahī kīāi pherī palāṭiai.
 Nānak proclaimed Lehṇā's succession - he earned it.
 They shared the One Light and the same way;
 the King just changed His body.
 (SGGS pg. 966)



Gurū Amar Dās Jī

Parkāsh	: In 1479 AD at village Bāsarke, district Amritsar, Panjāb
Parents	: Mātā Sulakhnī Jī and Bhāi Tej Bhān Jī
Gurū ke Mahal	: Mātā Mansā Devi Jī
Sāhibzāde	: Bābā Mohan and Bābā Mohrī Jī
Sāhibzādīā	: Bibī Dānī and Bibī Bhānī Jī
Accession to	: In 1552 AD at Khaḍūr Sāhib
Gurgaddī	
Bāṇī	: 869 hymns in 17 rāgas
Main Bāṇīs	: Anandu, Paṭī
Contributions	: * Established 22 centres (Manjīs) for the propagation of Sikh religion, on the Mughal pattern of 22 states * Construction of Bāuli in Goindwāl, thus rejecting the tradition of untouchability * Started the tradition of meeting the Gurū after partaking Laṅgar; Emperor Akbar on his visit to Gurū Sāhib was asked first to take Laṅgar * From Akbar got abolished Jazīā - a tax imposed upon non-Muslims * Upheld the women rights by opposing the rituals of Satī (self-immolating widow) and Pardā (veil)
City Founded	: Goindwāl on the banks of river Biās
Message	: Sevā, Paṅgat and Saṅgat
Contemporary	: Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605 AD)
Rulers	
Entrustment of	: Nominated Gurū Rām Dās Jī as the fourth Gurū of the Sikhs
Gurgaddī	
Joti-jot	: In 1574 AD at Goindwāl, district Amritsar



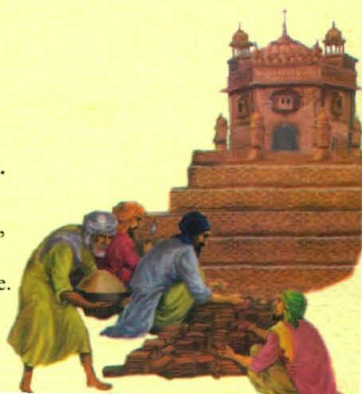
Bhale Amardās guṇ tere terī upmā tohi bani āvai.
 O Gurū Amar Dās, Your Glorious Virtues are sublime;
 Your Praises belong only to you.
 (SGGS pg. 1396)

Gurū Rām Dās Jī

- Parkāsh : In 1534 AD at Chūnī Mandī, Lāhore (now Pakistan)
- Parents : Mātā Dayā Kaur and Bhāi Har Dās Jī
- Gurū ke Mahal : Bībī Bhānī Jī
- Sāhibzāde : Bābā Prithī Chand, Bābā Mahā Dev and (Gurū) Arjan Dev Jī
- Accession to : In 1574 AD at Goindwāl
- Gurgaddī
- Bāṇī : 638 hymns in 30 rāgas
- Vārs : 8 - Sirī rāgu, Gauṛī, Bihāgarā, Vaḍhans, Sorath, Bilāval, Sārang and Kānaṛā rāgas
- Contributions : * Established the Masand system for strengthening the Sikh movement
 * Started the system of preparing hand-written Guṭkās
 * To describe the union of human soul with the Lord-Husband, in a symbolic way, he composed the Bani of 'Lāvā' in rāga Sūhī. This Bāṇī is also recited at the time of Anand Kāraj (marriage) of the Sikhs
- City Founded : Founded the city of Amritsar, earlier known as Gurū kā chakk and excavation of Amrit Sarovar (Pool of Nectar).
- Message : To be true Sikh, imbibe the Name of God and sing the glory of the Gurū
- Contemporary : Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605 AD)
- Rulers
- Entrustment of : Nominated his youngest Sāhibzādā (Gurū) Arjan Dev as the fifth Gurū of the Sikhs
- Gurgaddī
- Joti-jot : In 1581 AD at Goindwāl, district Amritsar



Dhannu dhannu Rāmdās Guru jinni siria tinai savāriā.
 Pūrī hoī karāmāti āpi sirjaṇhārai dhāriā.
 Blessed, blessed is Gurū Rām Dās; He who created You,
 has also exalted You. Perfect is Your miracle;
 the Creator Lord Himself has installed You on the throne.
 (SGGS pg. 968)



Gurū Arjan Dev Jī

Parkāsh	: In 1563 AD at Goindwāl, district Amritsar, Panjāb
Parents	: Bibī Bhānī and Gurū Rām Dās Jī
Gurū ke Mahal	: Mātā Gaṅgā Jī
Sāhibzādā	: (Gurū) Hargobind Jī
Accession to	: In 1581 AD at Goindwāl
Gurgaddī	
Bāṇī	: 2312 hymns in 30 rāgas
Main Bāṇīs	: Sukhmanī, Bāvan Akharī, Bārah Māhā, Guṇwantī, Din Rainī
Vārs	: 6 - Gauṛī, Gujārī, Jaitsarī, Rāmkalī, Mārū and Basant rāgas
Contributions	: * Constructed the Harimandar Sāhib with doors opened in four directions to preach the message of emergent equality and brotherhood. * Compilation of Ādi Granth in 1604 AD * Codified the system of Dasvandh (tithe) * Laid the foundation of martyrdom in Sikhism by becoming the first martyr and being called 'Pioneer of Martyrs' (shahīdā de sirtāj)
City Founded	: * Founded the Sarovar and city of Taran Tāran in 1590 AD and established a leprosy home over there to serve the lepers * Founded the city named Kartārpur in 1594 AD * Founded the city of Hargobindpur on the banks of river Biās
Message	: Laid emphasis on acquiring virtues like equality, brotherhood and fearlessness
Contemporary Rulers	: Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605 AD), Emperor Jahāngīr (r. 1605-26 AD)
Entrustment of Gurgaddī	: Nominated his Sāhibzādā (Gurū) Hargobind Jī as the sixth Gurū of the Sikhs.
Joti-jot	: In 1606 AD at Lāhore (now Pakistan)



Dharani gagan nav khand mahi joti svarūpī rahio bhari.
Bhani Mathurā kachhu bhedu nahī Guru Arjanu partakh hari.

He is totally pervading the earth,
the sky and the nine regions of the planet.
He is the Embodiment of the Light of God.

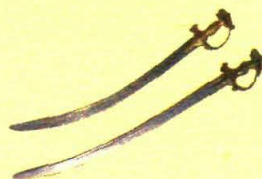
So speaks Mathurā: there is no difference between God and Gurū;
Gurū Arjun is the Personification of the Lord Himself.

(SGGS pg. 1407)



Gurū Hargobind Ji

Parkāsh	: In 1595 AD at Gurū kī Vaḍālī, district Amritsar, Panjāb
Parents	: Mātā Gaṅgā and Gurū Arjan Dev Ji
Gurū ke Mahal	: Bibī Damodarī, Bibī Nānakī and Bibī Mahā Devī Ji
Sāhibzāde	: Bābā Gurdittā, Bābā Sūraj Mal, Bābā Aṇī Rāi, Bābā Aṭal Rāi and (Gurū) Tegh Bahādar Ji
Sāhibzādī	: Bibī Vīro Ji
Accession to Gurgaddī	: In 1606 AD at Amritsar
Contributions	* Gave a new turn to the Sikh way of life by making them saint-soldiers * Facing Srī Harimandar Sāhib, constructed Srī Akāl Takht Sāhib in 1609 AD * Got 52 Rājās released from the fort of Gwālīor and is remembered as 'Bandi Chhor' * Inspired Sikhs to present youth and weapons as offerings * Fought and won four battles against Mughal armies from 1628 to 1634 AD
City Founded	: Kiratpur Sāhib, district Ropar, Panjāb
Message	: Imbided the spirit of high living, fearlessness and to fight against injustice among the Sikhs
Contemporary Rulers	: Emperor Jahāngīr (r. 1605-26 AD), Emperor Shāhjahān (r. 1627-58 AD)
Entrustment of Gurgaddī	: Nominated his grandson (Gurū) Har Rāi Ji as the seventh Gurū of the Sikhs
Jotī-jot	: In 1644 AD at Kiratpur

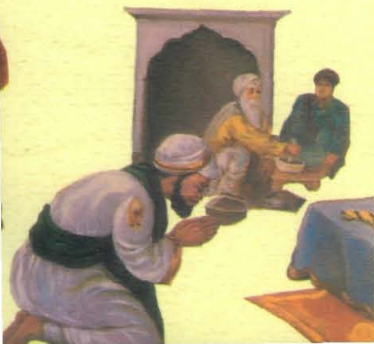
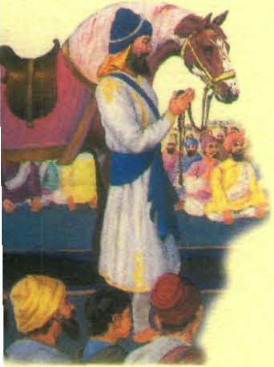


Panji piāle panji pīr chhaṭham pīru bāiṭhā guru bhārī.
 Arjanu kīā palatī kī mūrati Hari Gobind savārī.
 Five Pīrs were there who drank from the five cups
 and now the sixth great Pīr is holding the Gurūship.
 (Bhāi Gurdās Ji, Vār 1 Pauṛī 48)



Gurū Har Rāi Jī

- Parkāsh : In 1630 AD at Kīratpur, district Ropar, Panjāb
- Parents : Mātā Nihāl Kaur and Bābā Gurdittā Jī
- Gurū ke Mahal : Bībī Kishen Kaur (Sulakhnī)
- Sāhibzāde : Bābā Rām Rāi and (Gurū) Harkrishan Jī
- Accession to : In 1644 AD at Kīratpur
- Gurgaddī
- Contributions : * Maintained a cavalry of 2200 horses
 * For not maintaining the sanctity of Gurbānī, he excommunicated his son Bābā Rām Rāi from Sikhism
 * Created awareness for conservation of environment and vegetation
 * Established a dispensary in Kīratpur, from where sent medicine for Dārā Shikoh, the eldest son of Emperor Aurangzeb, when he was in distress
- Message : Mutual love, goodwill, modesty and 'Poor man's mouth is Gurū's golak (cash box)'
- Contemporary : Emperor Shāhjahān (r. 1627-58 AD), Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707 AD)
- Entrustment of : Nominated his youngest Sāhibzādā (Gurū) Harkrishan Jī as the eighth Gurgaddī
- Gurgaddī : Gurū of the Sikhs
- Jotī-jot : In 1661 AD at Kīratpur

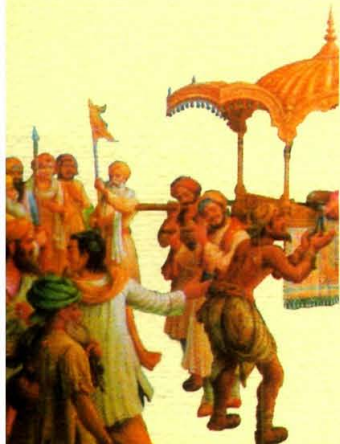


Hak parvar hak kesh gurū kartā Harrāi.
 Sultān ham darvesh gurū kartā Harrāi.
 (Tosīfo Sanā, Bhāi Nand Lāl Jī)



Gurū Harkrishan Ji

- Parkāsh : In 1656 AD at Kīratpur, district Ropar, Panjāb
- Parents : Mātā Kishen Kaur and Gurū Har Rāi Ji
- Accession to Gurgaddi : In 1661 AD at Kīratpur, at the age of approximately five years
- Contributions : * Utterance of teachings of 'Gītā' by Chhajjū, a water carrier, at Panjokhrā (Ambālā)
 * Removed the suspicion of Emperor Aurangzeb by identifying the queen at the place of Rājā Jai Singh
 * Served the people of Delhi when the city was in the grip of smallpox epidemic
- Message : Selfless service, humility and fearlessness
- Contemporary : Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707 AD)
- Rulers
- Entrustment of Gurgaddi : Knowing his last time to be near at Delhi, pointed to the devotees that the next Gurū was at 'Bābā Bakālē', the reference was to the ninth Gurū, Gurū Tegh Bahādar Sāhib, who was immersed in Nām-Simran at Bakālā
- Joti-jot : In 1664 AD at Delhi

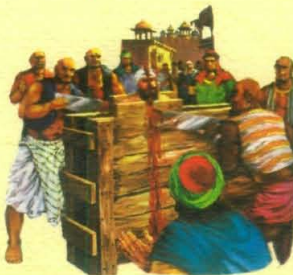
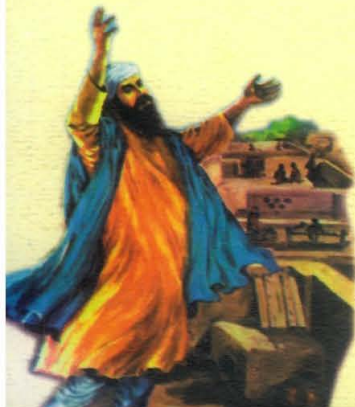
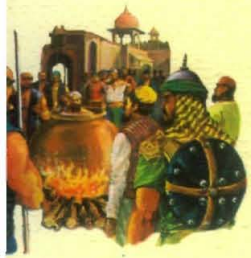


Gurū Har Kishan ā hamā fazalo zūd.
 Haksh azū hamā khusaga bar satūd.
 (Tosifo Sanā, Bhāi Nand Lāl Ji)



Gurū Tegh Bahādar Jī

- Parkāsh : In 1621 AD at Gurū ke Mahal, Amritsar, Panjāb
- Parents : Mātā Nānakī and Gurū Hargobind Jī
- Gurū ke Mahal : Mātā Gujrī Jī
- Sāhibzāde : (Gurū) Gobind Rāi (Singh) Jī
- Accession to Gurgaddī : Attainment in 1664 AD, revealed by Bhāi Makhaṇ Shāh Lubāṇā at Bakālā in 1665 AD
- Bāṇī : 116 hymns in 15 rāgas
- Contributions : * Undertook journeys for the propagation of Gurmat
 * Unique martyrdom for upholding the right to freedom of religion in 1675 AD and was called 'Hind dī Chādar' (anchor-sheet of Hind)
 * Along with him, three Sikhs - Bhāi Matī Dās, Bhāi Diālā and Bhāi Satī Dās also sacrificed their lives
- City Founded : Founded the city of Anandpur and Gurū kā Lāhore
- Message : Neither to be frightened nor to frighten anyone
- Contemporary : Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707 AD)
- Rulers
- Entrustment of Gurgaddī : Nominated his Sāhibzādā (Gurū) Gobind Rāi (Singh) Jī as the tenth Gurū of the Sikhs
- Jotī-jot : In 1675 AD at Delhi



Gurū Tegh Bahādar ā sarā pā afzal.
 Zīnat āraī mahifalī jāho jalāl.
 (Tosifo Sanā, Bhāi Nand Lāl Jī)

Gurū Gobind Singh Ji

- Parkāsh : In 1666 AD at Paṭnā Sāhib, Bihār
- Parents : Mātā Gujri and Gurū Tegh Bahādar Ji
- Gurū ke Mahal : Mātā Jīto, Mātā Sundrī and Mātā Sāhib Kaur Ji
- Sāhibzāde : Bābā Ajīt Singh, Bābā Jujhār Singh, Bābā Zorāwar Singh and Bābā Fateh Singh Ji
- Accession to Gurgaddi : In 1675 AD at Anandpur Sāhib
- Main Bāṇīs : Jāpu Sāhib, Tavprasād Savaiyye, Shabad Hazāre, Akāl Ustat, Zafarnāmā
- Contributions : * Fought and won many battles against Hilly Chieftans and Mughals, in the fight against tyranny and immorality
 * Creation of 'Khālsā' on the Baisākhī of 1699 AD by the way of 'Khaṇḍe ki Pāhul'
 * Unique martyrdom of his four Sāhibzādās and mother
- City Founded : Pāunṭā Sahib (Himāchal Pradesh) in 1685 AD
- Message : Inspired and imbibed the feelings of fearlessness, to fight against oppression and to become saint-soldiers
- Contemporary Rulers : Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707 AD), Emperor Bahādar Shāh (r. 1707-08 AD)
- Entrustment of Gurgaddi : Ordained the Sikhs to revere 'Granth Sāhib' as their everlasting 'Gurū'
- Joti-jot : In 1708 AD at Nānder (Hazūr Sāhib), Mahārāshṭra



Hakk hakk āgāh Guru Gobind Singh.
 Shāhi shahanshāh Guru Gobind Singh.
 (Tosifo Sanā Bhāi Nand Lāl Ji)



Gurū Granth Sāhib Jī

First Parkāsh	: In 1604 AD at Sṛī Harimandar Sāhib, Amritsar, Panjāb
Compiled by	: Gurū Arjan Dev Jī in 1599-1604 AD at Rāmsar, Amritsar
Written by	: Bhāī Gurdās Jī
First Granthī	: Bābā Buḍhā Jī
Final Shape	: By Gurū Gobind Singh Jī at Gurū kī Kāshī, Damdamā Sāhib, district Baṭhindā, Panjāb
Accession to Gurgaddī	: In the year 1708 AD, before his departure from the world, the tenth Gurū, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī instructed the Sikhs to revere this Granth as their Gurū
Bāṇī	: 5867 hymns
Total pages	: 1430
Total Rāgas	: 31
Total Contributors	: 36
Gurūs	: 6 - Gurū Nānak Dev Jī, Gurū Aṅgad Dev Jī, Gurū Amar Dās Jī, Gurū Rām Dās Jī, Gurū Arjan Dev Jī, Gurū Tegh Bahādar Jī
Bhagats	: 15 - Bhagat Kabīr (b. 1398 AD), Bhagat Nāmdev (b. 1270 AD), Bhagat Ravidās (b. 1376 AD), Bhagat Rāmānand (b. 1366), Bhagat Jāidev (b. 1201 AD), Bhagat Trilochan (b. 1267 AD), Bhagat Dhannā (b. 1415 AD), Bhagat Saiṇ (b. 1390 AD), Bhagat Pipā (b. 1426 AD), Bhagat Bhikhān (b. 1480 AD), Bhagat Sadhnā (13th century), Bhagat Parmānand (b. 1483 AD), Bhagat Sūrdās (b. 1529 AD), Bhagat Beṇī (15th century) and Sheikh Farīd (b. 1173 AD) Jī
Bhaṭṣ	: 11 - Bhaṭ Kalasahār, Jālap, Kīrat, Bhikhā, Salh, Bhalh, Nalh, Gayand, Mathurā, Balh and Haribans Jī
Other Contributors	: 4 - Bhāī Mardānā (b. 1459 AD), Rāi Balvaṇḍ, Bhāī Sattā and Bābā Sundar (1560-1603 AD) Jī



Pothī pamesar kā thān.

Sādhśaṅgi gāvahi guṇ gobind pūran brahm giānu.

This Holy Scripture is the home of the Transcendent Lord God.
Whoever sings the Glorious Praises of the Lord of the Universe in the
Sādh Saṅgat, the Company of the Holy,
has the perfect knowledge of God.

(SGGS pg. 1226)

Four Sāhibzāde

Bābā Ajit Singh

Bābā Ajit Singh, the eldest Sāhibzādā of Gurū Gobind Singh Jī, was born in 1687 AD at Pāunṭā Sāhib. He headed the group of 100 Sikhs at the age of 12 years, to punish the Rangharṣ of Nūh village who have looted the Sikh Saṅgat. He also showed tremendous courage when the hill chiefs supported by imperial troops attacked Anandpur Sāhib. He attained martyrdom while fighting against the Mughal troops in the battle of Chamkaur in December 1705 AD.

Bābā Jujhār Singh

Bābā Jujhār Singh was born in 1691 AD at Anandpur Sāhib. There, he acquired the teachings of Gurbāṇī and war fighting skills. While fighting against the heavy Mughal troops at Chamkaur Sāhib he got martyrdom, at 15 years of age, in December 1705 AD.

Bābā Zorāwar Singh

Bābā Zorāwar Singh was born in 1696 AD at Anandpur Sāhib. He acquired the teachings of Gurbāṇī and Sikh history from his grandmother Mātā Gujrī Jī. On getting separated from his parents and brothers, at the bank of river Sarsā, he faced the tribulations with extreme courage while living with his grandmother. Finally, he was bricked alive and martyred in December 1705 AD at Sarhind.

Bābā Fateh Singh

Bābā Fateh Singh, the youngest Sāhibzādā of Gurū Gobind Singh Jī, was born in 1699 AD at Anandpur Sāhib. With the inspiration and teachings from the grandmother Mātā Gujrī Jī, he along with his elder brother, Bābā Zorāwar Singh, got martyrdom in December 1705 AD at Sarhind for not accepting the other faith.



Pañj Piāre

Pañj Piāre literally means the five beloved ones. They were in the first batch who received 'Khanḍe kī Pāhul' from Gurū's hands and formed the nucleus of the Khālsā Panth.

Bhāi Dayā Singh

Bhāi Dayā Singh was a resident of Lāhore. His father Bhāi Sudhā was a devotee of Gurū Tegh Bahādar Sahib and he often used to visit Anandpur Sāhib to pay his obeisance to the Gurū. His previous name was 'Dayā Rām' and he was the first one to adore as a Singh on the Baisākhī day of the year 1699 AD, at the time of the creation of Khālsā, by offering his head to receive the 'Khanḍe kī Pāhul' (rites of two edged sword). He remained with Gurū Gobind Singh Jī for rest of his life and finally died at Nānder. He was the one to carry the 'Zafarnāmā', sent by Gurū Gobind Singh to Aurangzeb, in the south.

Bhāi Dharam Singh

Bhāi Dharam Singh was a resident of Hastināpur. He was the son of Bhāi Sant Rām, who was a devotee of Gurū's place. He offered his head to take the 'Khanḍe kī Pāhul' on the Baisākhī of 1699 AD and was included in the Pañj Piārās. He actively participated in the battles of Gurū Gobind Singh Jī fought against the Mughals and hill chiefs. He also accompanied Bhāi Dayā Singh to deliver the 'Zafarnāmā' to Aurangzeb in the south. He served Gurū Sāhib while living in Nānder and passed away there.

Bhāi Himmat Singh

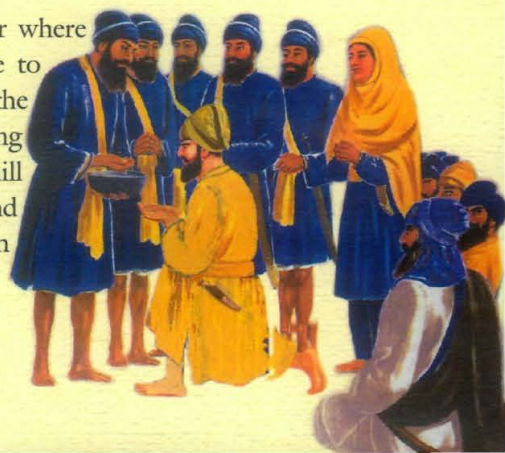
Bhāi Himmat Singh was born and brought up in Jagannāth Purī where Gurū Nānak Dev Jī went during his journeys. He came to Anandpur Sāhib in the service of the Tenth Master in 1699 AD and received 'Khanḍe kī Pāhul' after offering his head to Gurū Sahib. He attained martyrdom in the fierce battle of Chamkaur in 1705 AD.

Bhāi Mohkam Singh

Bhāi Mohkam Singh was the son of Bhāi Tirath Chand of Dwārkā. He became a Singh on the Baisākhī of 1699 AD and was included in the Pañj Piārās. He attained martyrdom in 1705 AD in the battle of Chamkaur.

Bhāi Sāhib Singh

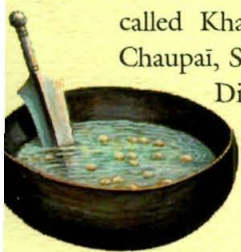
Bhāi Sāhib Singh was born and brought up in Bidar where Gurū Nānak Dev Jī went during his journeys. He came to Anandpur Sāhib in the service of the Tenth Master at the age of 16 years. He actively participated in the battles, along with Gurū Gobind Singh Jī, against the Mughals and hill chiefs. He became a Singh on the Baisākhī of 1699 AD and was included in the Pañj Piārās. He attained martyrdom in the battle of Chamkaur in 1705 AD.



Amrit

Amrit is a vow taken in front of Pañj Piārās in the Divine Presence of Gurū Granth Sāhib. This vow implies that now onwards, this being would live in consonance with Gurū's tenets. From Gurū Nānak Dev Jī to Gurū Tegh Bahādar Sāhib, the ceremony of Charan-Pāhul was prevalent at the time of initiating someone as a Sikh. The Tenth Master, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī, changed the prevalent system to 'Khaṇḍe Bāṭe dī Pāhul' as the way to the creation of Khālsā.

Nowadays, the five baptized Sikhs dissolve sugarplums (Patāshās) in clean water contained in a round bowl of steel (Bāṭā) while stirring it with the double-edged sword called Khaṇḍā. These Pañj Piārās, while preparing Amrit, recite Japu Jī, Jāpu Sāhib, Chaupāī, Savaīyye and Anandu Sāhib, while sitting in Vir-Āsan (warrior-posture) and in the Divine Presence of Gurū Granth Sāhib. The prepared Pāhul is administered methodically to the seeker through which he enters the order of the Khālsā.



Khālsā

The word 'Khālsā' is derived from the Arabic 'Khālis', meaning, pure, unsullied. Khālsā is the word used collectively for the community of baptized Sikhs. It is a specific connotation used to address an individual Singh or a group of them. The Khālsā Panth implies the collective, spiritually directed will of the community guided by Gurū Granth Sāhib. Khālsā should remain unique without hurting the sentiments of any person of other religion. Khālsā is the one, who:

Jāgat jot japai nis bāsūr ek binā man naik nā ānai.

Pūran prem pratīṭ sajai brat gor maṛhī maṭ bhūl nā mānai.

Tirath dān daia tap sanjam ek binā nahi ek pachhānai.

Pūran joti jagai ghaṭ mai tab khālas tāhi nakhālas jānai.

He, who meditates in the name of God and recognizes none other than Him.

He who bestows full love and faith in Him,

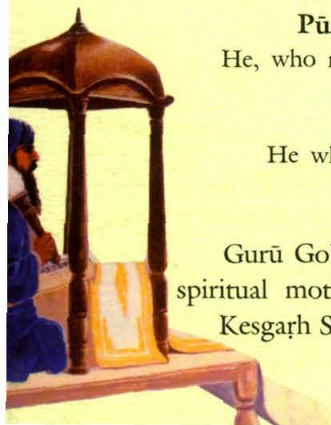
does not indulge in fasting and worship of cemeteries.

He who never recognizes pilgrimage, alms, futile mercy, penances etc.

In whose mind shines the light of Perfect Being,

is recognized as a true Khālsā.

Gurū Gobind Singh Jī is the spiritual father and Mātā Sāhib Kaur is the spiritual mother of the Khālsā. The spiritual birthplace of Khālsā is Kesgarh Sāhib and Anandpur Sāhib is its native place.



Five Kakārs (K's)

Gurū Gobind Singh Jī, at the time of creation of Khālsā with 'Khaṇḍe Bāte dī Pāhul', ordered everybody to wear five Kakārs to initiate as Khālsā. These five Kakārs, known as symbol of the Khālsā, beginning with the phoneme 'k', are essential for every baptized Sikh. The set of these five symbols present the distinctive features of the Khālsā, which set them off from the followers of any other religious faith. These 'Kakārs' are same for every Sikh.

Kes

Kes or unshorn hair is the stamp of the Gurū. A Sikh believes them to be a treasure blessed upon by the Gurū. One having Kes has been symbolized as a cosmic being, who has been described as "Sohaṇe nak jin lamṛe vālā" - having beautiful nose and unshorn hair, in Gurbāṇī. Gurū Gobind Singh Jī created Khālsā in the image of this cosmic being. The unshorn hair indicates living in Gurū's Will and Sikh has to preserve the form blessed upon him by the Lord.



Kanghā

Kanghā or comb is to be kept in the hair to keep the hair clean while combing and saving them from matted condition. Matted hair symbolizes renunciation of the world, which is contrary to the Sikh tradition.



Kaṛā

Kaṛā, which adorned generally on the right wrist, is made of iron. Kaṛā testimonies the fact that Sikh do not believe in superstitions or false beliefs and lives in the Gurū's Will.



Kachhaheṛā

Every Khālsā is enjoined to wear a Kachhaheṛā, a pair of specially designed shorts, symbolizes the high conduct of the individual wearing it. It is of tight fitting and covers the thighs up to the knees. Kachhaheṛā stands to negate the concept of nudity prevalent in Indian asceticism. It restricts a Sikh to adhere to the social norms as a balanced social being.



Kirpān

In the Sikh religion, Kirpān or sword is a weapon that cuts ignorance from its roots and one perceives the transcendental knowledge. As God is the one who destroys ignorance, thus Kirpān symbolizes God Himself. Besides this, Kirpān is a weapon that can be used in both offence as well as defence. Apart from this, it reveals the free entity of the Sikhs and signifies that Sikhs cannot become slave of anyone. Its use must be for upholding righteousness and justice. Kirpān literally means a weapon used for self-esteem, but in the form of Kirpā or grace, not in the form of tyranny.



Five Takhts

Takht is a Persian word meaning a throne or royal seat. In the Sikh tradition, Takht symbolizes a seat of authority combining both the temporal as well as eternal. All the five Takhts, equally regarded by the Sikhs as high seats of religious authority, are equally venerated, but Srī Akāl Takht Sāhib at Amritsar enjoys a special status. The issues related to the entire Sikh community are discussed at Akāl Takht alone. Therefore, Gurmatā or resolution adopted in a Sikh congregation at Akāl Takht is binding on the Sikhs, all over the world. Moreover, Sarbat Khālsā can be summoned only from Akāl Takht. The other four Takhts are of provincial nature. The issues discussed and resolved, on these four Takhts, are obligatory for the local Sikhs. However, to alter these decisions mandatory for whole Sikh community, they must be endorsed by the Akāl Takht.

Srī Akāl Takht Sāhib, Amritsar

It is the primary seat of Sikh religious authority and central altar for Sikh political assembly. It is the highest seat of temporal as well as spiritual authority of the Sikhs, constructed by the Sixth Master, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib, in 1609 AD at Amritsar, Panjāb, facing Srī Harimandar Sāhib. It literally means the Throne of the Timeless.



Takht Srī Harimandar Sāhib, Paṭnā Sāhib

It is situated in Paṭnā, now the capital of the state of Bihār. It is the birth place of the Tenth Master, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī. Harimandar literally means the House of God. It is revered as the second Takht of the Sikhs.



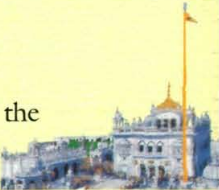
Takht Srī Kesgarh Sāhib, Anandpur Sāhib

This is the third Takht of the Sikhs, situated in the Shivālik range in Ropar district of Panjāb. It marks the site of the Kesgarh fort where the historic Baisākhī congregation had taken place. It symbolizes the turning point in Sikh history. At this place, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī baptized Pañj Piārās in 1699 AD and created the Order of Khālsā.



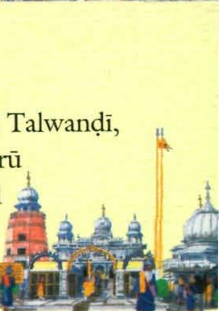
Takht Srī Hazūr Sāhib, Nānder

It is situated at Nānder, a district town in Mahārāshṭra, on the left bank of the river Godāvari. Bestowing the succession on Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī passed away at this place in 1708 AD. Hazūr Sahib, the fourth Takht, is a title of reverence, meaning Exalted Presence.



Takht Srī Damdamā Sāhib, Sābo kī Talwandī

This is the fifth Takht of the Sikhs, situated in the vicinity of village Sābo kī Talwandī, district Baṭhindā in Panjāb. Damdamā Sāhib is a place of repose where Gurū Gobind Singh Jī had some respite after a period of continuous turmoil and camped here for around nine months. Bhāi Manī Singh Jī prepared a fresh copy of Gurū Granth Sāhib under the supervision of the Tenth Master at this place. Here, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī gave final shape to Gurū Granth Sāhib, earlier compiled by the Fifth Master, Gurū Arjan Dev Jī.



Mūl Mantar

This is the primary or fundamental creed of the Sikh faith. The form and attributes of Akāl Purakh are described in the Mūl Mantar. The Mūl Mantar is stated below :

**Ik Oankār Satinām(u) Kartā Purakhu Nirbhau Nirvairu
Akāl Mūrati Ajūnī Saibhaṅ Gurprasādi.**

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Ik | - He is the One Supreme Being. |
| Oankār | - He is Omnipresent. |
| Satināmu | - He is the Eternal Truth |
| Kartā | - He is the Creator. |
| Purakhu | - He is the All-pervading One. |
| Nirbhau | - He is fearless. |
| Nirvairu | - He has no hatred or malice for anyone. |
| Akāl Mūrati | - He is beyond death, He has no form, He is the Being Beyond Time. |
| Ajūnī | - He is beyond incarnation. He neither is born nor dies. |
| Saibhaṅ | - He is Self-existent. |
| Gurprasādi | - Such Akāl Purakh is realized with the Grace of the Gurū. |

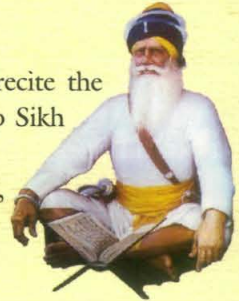
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ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ
ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ
ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰਗੁ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ

Nitnem

It is the name given to the daily prayers. Every Sikh is commanded to recite the following scriptural compositions every day, alone or in company, according to Sikh Rehat Maryādā :

- The Japu Jī, Jāpu and Ten Savaīyye (Quartets) - beginning 'Srāwag Sudh', in the morning.
- Sodar Rahirās in the evening after sunset, and
- Sohilā to be recited at night before going to bed.

Nitnem is an important part of Sikh way of life. Every Sikh should recite it daily.



Gurmantar

Vāhigurū is Gurmantar for a Sikh. It is the invocatory formula received from the Gurū. It is that term, significant of the Supreme Being, which the Gurū confides to the Sikhs to meditate on. The word 'Vāhigurū' has been the Gurmantar for the Sikhs from the very beginning.

Vāhigurū gurmantra hai japi haumai khoī.

Vāhigurū is the gurmantar, by repeating it thy ego is erased.

(Bhāi Gurdās, Vār 13 Paūṛī 2)

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ

Saṅgat

Saṅgat stands for the body of men and women meeting religiously, especially in the presence of Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib. For this reason only, Gurbāṇī illustrates - "Vichi saṅgati hari prabh vasai jiu" - In the Congregation, the Lord God abides.

The meeting of those is referred to as 'Satsaṅgat' in whose body-mind-wealth and thought resides the Gurū.

Satsaṅgat, fellowship of the holy, is applauded as a means of moral and spiritual uplift; it is as well a social unit which inculcates values of brotherhood, equality and Sevā.

In current usage, it signifies an assembly of the devotees in the presence of Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib, where the praises of Almighty, Kīrtan of Gurbāṇī and contemplation upon the Name of God is done.

There is no discrimination of caste, creed or high-low in the Saṅgat.



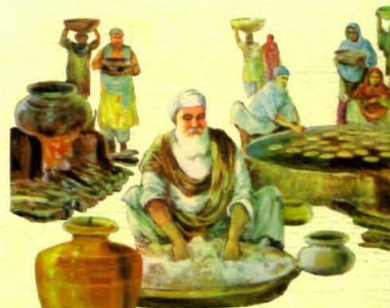
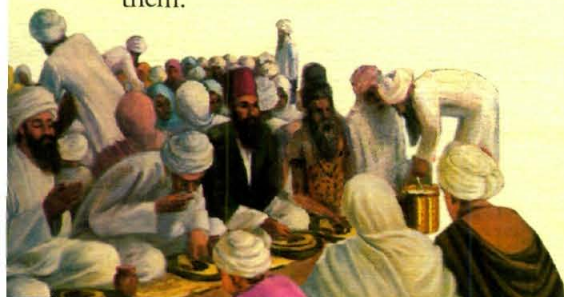
Laṅgar

It is an institution of fundamental importance in Sikhism. It is referred to as the food received to satisfy the hunger of the body without any expenses. The pure air, pure water and pure food provided by the nature is also called the 'Laṅgar'.

Gurū Nānak Sāhib started the practice of Laṅgar and this institution is prevailing till date in the Gurdwārās all over the world. Gurū Amar Dās Jī attached particular importance to this institution. He expected every visitor to partake food before seeing him. This gave rise to the popular saying - pahile Paṅgat pāche Saṅgat - eating together must take precedence over meeting together.

The use of any article in the Laṅgar has been considered worthy that satisfies the bodily hunger and is without any dispute. The institution of Laṅgar symbolizes selfless service, love and brotherhood among the Sikhs.

Laṅgar is the sitting together in a row to partake food from a common kitchen regardless of caste, creed, sex, age or social status. It is customary for diners in the Gurū kī Laṅgar to sit side by side in a Paṅgat or row when Sevādārs or volunteers serve food to them.



Sevā - Simran

Sevā and Simran are two fundamental concepts and primary forces of Sikhism. The treasure of all Sikh virtues originate and focus upon them.

Sevā means to render service. It is the touchstone of Sikhism. It is a prominent part of Sikhism and illustrative models of voluntary service, whose training is imparted in the Gurdwārās.

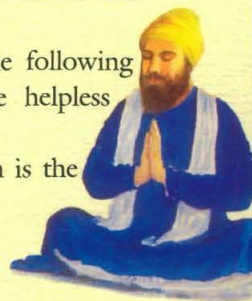
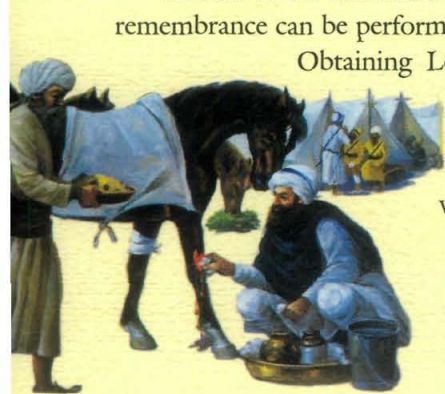
The prime attribute of Sevā is humility and shedding of ego. The service of any needy person by means of body, mind and wealth has been regarded as true service.

Simran literally means to remember, contemplate. The Simran of Lord is to contemplate upon the attributes of the Lord, remember them and abide them in the heart.

Simran is the remembrance and nurturing of the attributes of the Lord in mind. The remembrance can be performed with tongue or exclusively within the heart.

Obtaining Lord's virtues in mind by means of Simran, while following Gurū's word, and to serve the needy and the helpless selflessly, is the true service.

Sevā is the worship of immanent and Simran is the worship of transcendental form of God.



Kirtan

Kirtan is a specific feature of Sikh worship. It means singing the scriptural compositions in traditional musical measures.

Kirtan is commonly accepted mode of rendering devotion to God by singing His praises. In the congregation, Kirtan only of Gurbāṇī (Gurū Granth Sāhib's or Gurū Gobind Singh's hymns) and, for its elaboration, of the compositions of Bhāi Gurdās and Bhāi Nand Lāl, may be performed.

According to 'Sikh Rehat Maryādā', only a Sikh may perform Kirtan in a congregation. Sikh should listen to the Gurū's teachings, make them the basis of one's life; this is the real listening to the Kirtan.



Ardās

The word 'Ardās' means a petition, a memorial or an address to a superior authority. It is a petition of a soul before the Supreme Lord.

To pray God for uninterrupted fulfillment of every task is a custom in Sikhism.

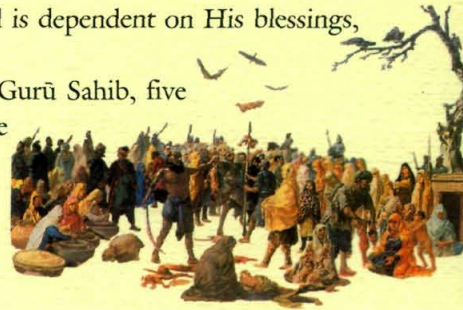
It is the hearty prayer which Sikhs, individually or in congregation, recite morning and evening before launching off and after completion of any task.

If the Parkāsh of Gurū Granth Sāhib is not there, the performing of Ardās facing any direction is acceptable.

A Sikh should pray to God before launching off any task, so that one does not feel proud of oneself and acquire humility.

When the mind bows before the All-Powerful Lord and is dependent on His blessings, the said Ardās is accepted.

Ardās is a brief manifestation of Sikh history in which Gurū Sahib, five beloved ones, Sikh concepts and martyred Sikhs are remembered daily.



Degh Tegh Fateh

It is a Sikh saying, which literally means victory (Fateh) to kettle (Degh) and sword (Tegh).

Degh Fateh means that the Almighty is fulfilling all the basic needs of creation. Tegh means that a Sikh should realize the spiritual power blessed by the Almighty in his inner self and keeping his enemies or vices under control, kill the disease of ego.

This saying in the Sikh tradition has come to stand for the ideal of public welfare or general benevolence. It means sustenance of needy and destruction of the evil. Holā Mahallā symbolizes this saying of the Khālsā.



Sarbat dā Bhalā

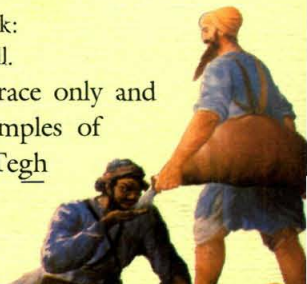
Every human being is enlightened with His light. Keeping in mind, when any Sikh ceremony concludes, the Sikhs add it in their prayer to God:

Nānak nām chaṛhḍī kalā tere bhāṇe sarbat dā bhalā.

May God's Name, may the human spirit forever triumph, Nānak:

And in Thy Will may peace and prosperity come to one and all.

Sikh loves the entire creation as he considers humanity to be one race only and works for its upliftment without any distinction. There are many examples of Sarbat dā Bhalā in the Sikh history, such as the martyrdom of Gurū Tegh Bahādar Sāhib and selfless service by Bhāi Kanhaiyā Jī etc.



Gurdwārā

Wherever Gurū Nānak Sāhib went during his journeys, he established Saṅgat over there. He established Dharamshālās to sing and contemplate the praises of God in the congregation, which, later on, began to be called as Gurdwārās.

A Gurdwārā is a school for the students, way of spiritual knowledge for the Sikhs, clinic for the morbid, food fulfillment for the needy, house of protection for the women and habitation for the travellers. The Gurdwārās are the centres of Gurū's precepts, places of worship, sources of religious life and education, training centres for the social services and community deliberations. Gurdwārā is a nucleus for the Sikh way of life. Visiting a Gurdwārā, Sikh bows before Gurū Granth Sāhib and it means to abide by every order of the Gurū.

The essential feature of a Gurdwārā is the presiding presence in it of the eternal Gurū, Gurū Granth Sāhib. Gurdwārā is a central place to associate to Gurū Granth Sāhib. It is a public place open to all devotees to pray individually or to assemble in congregation. Here, one comes to know of the Shabad residing in Gurū Granth Sāhib and attains the Ultimate Destination. Through this Gurū's door, the journey of one's life is completed: "Joti jot rali sampūran thiā rām" - One's light blends with the Light, and one becomes totally perfect.

Gurdwārā is the spring and source of propagation of Sikhism.

Nishān Sāhib

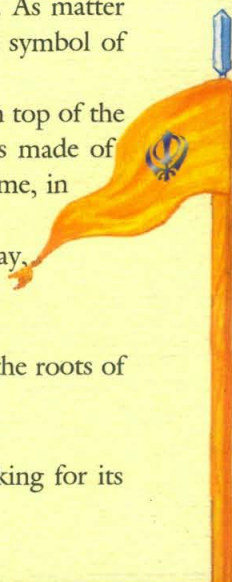
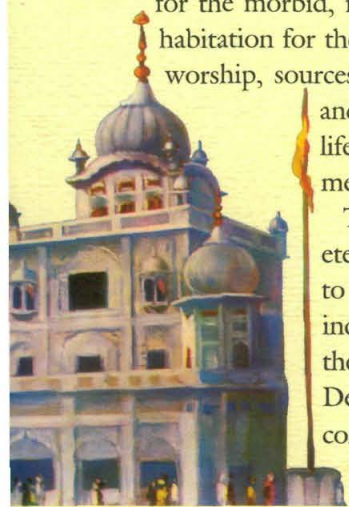
At a high-level site in every Gurdwārā should be installed the Nishān Sāhib. As matter of religious injunction, it must hoist at every building of the Gurdwārā. It is a symbol of sovereignty for the Sikhs.

The cloth of the flag should be either of xanthic or of grayish blue colour. On top of the flag post, there should be either a spearhead or a Khandā. The Nishān Sāhib is made of cotton or silk cloth and is triangular. This saffron flag was hoisted, for the first time, in 1609 AD at Srī Akāl Takht Sāhib.

A pole of timber or metal supports the Nishān Sāhib, which is in vogue today, having Khandā embroidered or printed on it, signifies:

- Two swords** - Symbolize the spiritual and temporal authority.
- Khandā** - A double-edged sword, fixed at top, symbolizes eradication of the roots of ignorance and superstitions.
- Chakar** - Symbolizes the creation of the Universe.

This Nishān Sāhib is referred to in the daily prayer (Ardās) of the Sikhs asking for its eternality.



Sri Harimandar Sāhib

It literally means the House of God. It is the most famous sacred shrine of the Sikhs in Amritsar, Panjāb, designed and established by the fifth Gurū of the Sikhs, Gurū Arjan Dev Ji. He set the building with four doors opened in each of the four directions signifying its accessibility to all irrespective of caste, colour and creed. In this sense, the structure of this sacred building presents the unique Sikh architecture. Gurū Ji installed 'Granth Sāhib' here for the first time and revealed the significance of this place. Harimandar Sāhib, the epitome of Sikhism and centre of Sikh religious powers, is also called Darbār Sāhib.

Knowing the significance of this place, Mahārājā Raṅjit Singh performed the service of gold plating on it, due to which it is also known as 'Golden Temple' to the English-speaking world.

Being the source of Sikh inspiration, this place has been a rankle in the eyes of the Sikh enemies, as a result of which there have been efforts to destroy this place, but the respect and esteem of this place has grown day by day in the Sikh hearts.



Sarovar

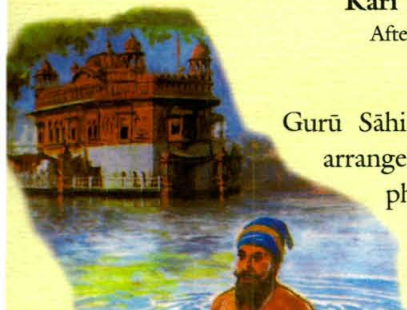
Sarovar is an important part of a Gurdwārā. Gurdwārā symbolizes spiritual purity whereas Sarovar symbolizes physical or bodily cleanliness. Gurū Arjan Dev Ji states while describing the dual importance of Gurdwārā and Sarovar :

Kari isnānu simari prabhu apanā man tan bhae arogā.

After taking your cleansing bath, remember your God in meditation,
so that your mind and body be devoid of disease.

(SGGS pg. 611)

Gurū Sāhibs themselves started establishing the Sarovars and there is an arrangement of Sarovar with almost every historical Gurdwārā. Besides physical cleanliness, these Sarovars fulfill the scarcity of water and further are symbolic of the feeling of equality.



Sikh Rehat Maryādā

‘Rahit Maryādā’ means the way of life, code of living through which one lives safe and systematically. In the Sikh religion, Gurū blesses the Sikh with this way of life and he lives his life in consonance with it. That’s why it has been named ‘Sikh Rehat Maryādā’ (The Code of Sikh Conduct and Conventions). The origin of this way of life is Gurū Granth Sāhib, which inspires the Sikhs with the guidance at every arduous turn of life. Every Sikh must adhere to this code in his or her daily life.

The report prepared by Sikh scholars after many years of tremendous effort was accepted by Shiromaṇī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee on 3 February 1945, with significant rectifications, and this ‘Sikh Rehat Maryādā’ was made mandatory for every Sikh. It is published by the leading Sikh institutions and distributed free throughout the world.



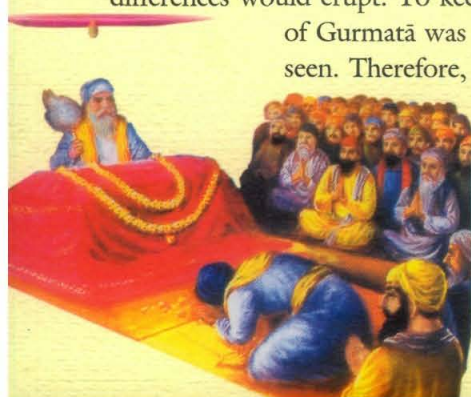
Chastisement (Tankhāh)

Chastisement means the religious punishment. If any norm of ‘Sikh Rehat Maryādā’ is violated intentionally, he or she is liable to chastisement. It is a method of making a Sikh realize the mistake and stopping him or her to repeat it in future. This is for the self-purification of a Sikh which motivates him to follow the Gurū’s tenets with full determination. According to the ‘Sikh Rehat Maryādā’, any Sikh who has committed any omission in the observance of the Sikh discipline should approach the nearby Sikh congregation and make a confession of his lapse standing before the congregation. Then the five beloved ones elected by the congregation, propose the chastisement (Tankhāh). Finally, an Ardās should be performed for correction.

Gurmatā

The collective decisions taken, to lay down any political and organizational strategy, in the light of Gurū’s tenets is called Gurmatā. It is clear from the word ‘Gurmatā’ itself that individual or personal opinion is being deleted from it. Ego, jealousy, enmity, etc. are diminished from the decisions taken by realizing Gurū to be the Supreme Lord and there is a feeling of modesty and love emerging from it.

It is obvious that at the time of taking political and social decisions, a dichotomy and differences would erupt. To keep the Panth united and unified during these times, the way of Gurmatā was adopted, from which strolling ahead of Panthic unity can be seen. Therefore, no other way superior to this can be believed upon to keep the entire community tied in one cord and keep them moving for the constructive purposes. According to the ‘Sikh Rehat Maryādā’, the Gurmatā can only be on a subject that affects the fundamental principles of Sikh religion and for their upholding. The Panth only by a select primary Panthic group or a representative gathering can adopt Gurmatā.



Gurū Panth

The word 'Panth' originated from Sanskrit 'path' meaning way or passage. In Sikhism, the way described by the Gurū is called 'Gurū Panth'. Usually, this word stands for the Sikh faith as well as Sikh people as a whole.

The most fruitful service for a Sikh is the service that secures the optimum good by minimal endeavour. This can be achieved through organized collective action. A Sikh has, for this reason, to fulfil his Panthic obligations, even as he performs his individual duties. This corporate entity is the Panth.

According to the 'Sikh Rehat Maryādā', "The Gurū Panth (Panth's status of Gurūhood) means the whole body of committed baptized Sikhs. This body was fostered by all the ten Gurūs and the tenth Gurū gave it its final shape and invested it with Gurūhood."

The existence of Gurū Panth cannot be imagined without Gurū Granth and the Gurū Sāhibs in one way or the other have used both of them :

**Iku ūtamu panthu suniu gur saṅgati
tahi milant jam trās miṭāi.**

I have heard that the most exalted Path of all is the Saṅgat,
the Gurū's congregation joining which the fear of death is taken away.

(SGGS pg. 1406)

Hukamnāmā

Hukamnāmā is a written letter in which an order is issued to the Sikh Saṅgat. Sikh believes the Shabad of Gurū to be the Order of the Gurū. That is why the letters written by Gurū Sāhibs to the Sikhs on various occasions have been referred to as Hukamnāmās. After the Gurū Sāhibs, the letters released by Mātā Sundrī Jī and Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar are also called Hukamnāmās. Before the departure from this world, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī gave the status of Gurūship to both 'The Granth' and 'The Panth'. Therefore, the decisions taken by the Panth in the light of Gurū Granth Sāhib are called Hukamnāmās. In addition, the order issued jointly by the five heads of the Takhts from Srī Akāl Takht Sāhib, in the name of Sikh Saṅgat is called Hukamnāmā.

Nānakshāhī Calendar

Considering Srī Harimandar Sāhib, Srī Amritsar to be epitome of Sikh religion, the calendar prepared to provide significant information about the dates and days related to Sikh history in a scientific way, is called Nānakshāhī calendar. This calendar begins from the year of Parkāsh of Gurū Nānak Dev Jī, i.e. 1526 Bikramī or 1469 AD. The year has been started according to the Bāṇī of "Bārah Māhā" from the month of Chet and distributed in 12 months. The first five months in this calendar are of 31 days and remaining 7 months of 30 days. In the leap year, the last month of Phaggaṇ is of 31 days. The calendar prepared after extensive study of the Sikh religious scriptures, released from Srī Akāl Takht Sāhib in 2003 AD, added to the concept of Sikhs being a distinctive nation.

ਚੇਤ ੫੪੦ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ-੦੪											
ਐਤ	ਸੋਮ	ਮੰਗਲ	ਬੁੱਧ	ਵੀਰ	ਸ਼ੁੱਕਰ	ਸ਼ਨੀ					
੩੧ 15 ਅਪਰੈਲ					੧ ਕਿੱਧਰ	੨ 13 ਅਪਰੈਲ					
੩ 16 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੪ 17 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੫ 18 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੬ 19 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੭ 20 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੮ ਯੁਗਮੀ	੯ 21 ਅਪਰੈਲ					
੧੦ 22 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੧ 23 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੨ 24 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੩ 25 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੪ 26 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੫ 27 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੬ 28 ਅਪਰੈਲ					
੧੭ 29 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੮ 30 ਅਪਰੈਲ	੧੯ 1 ਮਈ	੨੦ 2 ਮਈ	੨੧ 3 ਮਈ	੨੨ 4 ਮਈ	੨੩ 5 ਮਈ					
੨੪ 6 ਮਈ	੨੫ 7 ਮਈ	੨੬ 8 ਮਈ	੨੭ 9 ਮਈ	੨੮ 10 ਮਈ	੨੯ 11 ਮਈ	੩੦ 12 ਮਈ					

Sikh Ceremonies

Four ceremonies are considered important in Sikh way of life as per Sikh Rehat Maryādā :

Birth Ceremony:

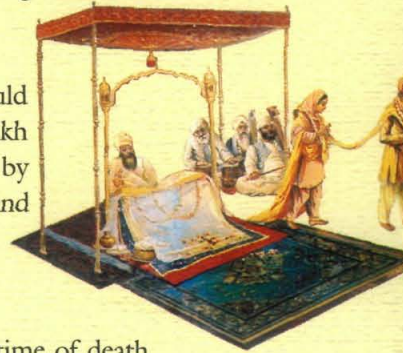
There is no calculation of the superstition or bad omens subscribed at the time of birth of child in a Sikh's household. Only thanksgiving to the Almighty is the normal practice.

Naming Ceremony

A child is named after the first letter of the hymn of the Hukam (command) from Gurū Granth Sāhib. The boy's name must have the suffix 'Singh' and the girl's, the suffix 'Kaur'.

Anand Ceremony

Literally Joyful Ceremony. Anand marriage rites should solemnize a Sikh's marriage. It is called the Anand Kāraj. Sikh bridegroom and bride listen to the Bāṇī of "Lāvā" composed by Gurū Rām Dās Jī in the Divine Presence of Gurū Granth Sāhib and take four circumambulations around Gurū Granth Sāhib.



Funeral Ceremony

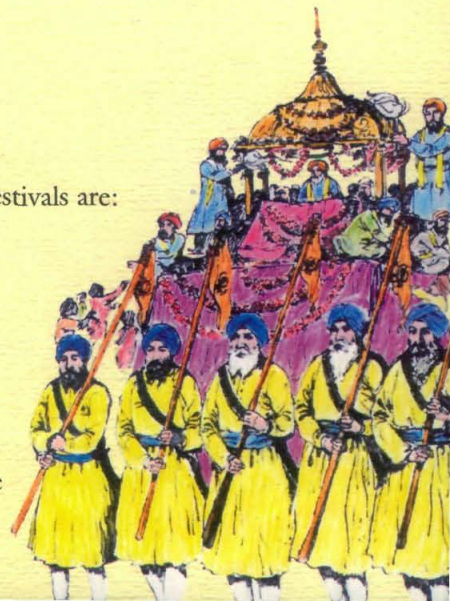
A Sikh should not indulge in any superstitious belief at the time of death of a person and should induce a mood of resignation to God's Will. How much young the deceased may be, the body should be cremated. However, where arrangements for cremation cannot be made, there should be no qualm about the body being immersed in flowing water or disposed off in any other manner.

Sikh Festivals

Every community has its own set of festivals. The Sikh festivals are:

- * Parkāsh Purabs (the days of birth) of Gurū Sāhibān
- * Gurgaddi purabs (the days of accession to Gurgaddi) of Gurū Sāhibān
- * Jotī-jot purabs and days of martyrdom of Gurū Sāhibān
- * The day of creation of Khālsā - 'Vaisākhi'
- * Historical days of past and present Gursikhs
- * Days of martyrdom of Sikh martyrs

It is the duty of every Sikh to participate actively in the Sikh festivals.



Kaṛāh Parsād

Kaṛāh Parsād or the sacred pudding has a significant place in Sikh tradition. It is distributed in the Saṅgat after offering it to the Akāl Purakh. There is a tradition of preparing it in the Gurdwārās daily and in the Sikh houses on the days of Gurburab or some special occasions. The devotees have been offering the Kaṛāh Parsād made in their houses at the Gurdwārās for a long period. The Kaṛāh Parsād offered before Gurū Sāhib is considered the blessing of the Gurū and while distributing it in the congregation, no Sikh or non-Sikh refuses to accept it and it can be consumed easily by the person of any age.

For preparing Kaṛāh Parsād, five contents - wheat flour, pure sugar, clarified butter, water and fire is used and the method of preparing it has been described in the 'Sikh Rehat Maryādā'. Only the Kaṛāh Parsād, which has been prepared or got prepared according to the prescribed method, is acceptable in the congregation. In addition, the person who doles out the Kaṛāh Parsād among the congregation should do so without any discrimination based on personal regard or spite.

Dasvandh (Tithe)

Giving ten percent of one's earning for righteous way is a law of Sikh religion (Poor man's mouth is Gurū's Golak). A feeling of service of humanity and brotherhood is developed with this. Gurū Arjan Dev Jī started this tradition of tithe.

To give one's Dasvandh or tenth share means the wealth and materials acquired by a Sikh are the blessings of the Lord and it is not his own.



Gurmukhī Lipī

It is the name of the script used by the Sikh Gurūs for writing Panjābī language. The word 'Gurmukhī' seems to have gained currency from the use of these letters to record the sayings coming from the Mukh (mouth) of the Gurūs. The origin of this script is attributed to the second Gurū, Gurū Aṅgad Dev Jī. He modified and rearranged certain letters and shaped them into a script. The word 'ṛāṛā' (ੴ) used in this script, is not seen in any other language. The total number of letters in Gurmukhī script is 35.



Nām Japṇā, Kirat Karnī, Vanḍ Chhakṇā

It means ever to repeat God's Name, to be ready to engage in the labour of one's hands and to be willing to share with others what one has gathered. This is said to be the triple principle underlying Sikh ethics and way of life. For a Sikh the ideal life is that of a householder, who, with the name and fear of God (and of God alone) always in his heart, earns his livelihood by honest labour and shares his victuals with the needy. In Sikhism, the way of hermit or recluse is not approved.

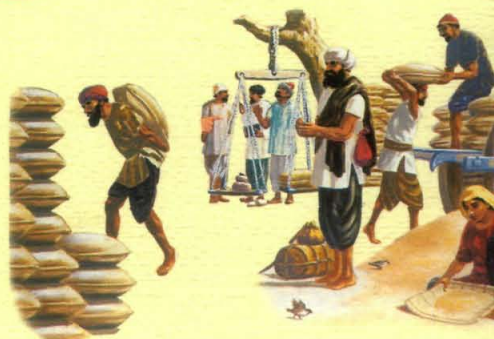
Nām Japṇā

Literally means to recite and repeat the Name of God. "Repetition of God's Name erases doubt and delusion", says Gurū Arjan Dev Jī in the Bāṇī, and "expunging grief, pain and fear, it produces happiness everlasting". It is a Divine Gift depending on God's grace.



Kirat Karnī

Kirat Karnī or to work to gain one's livelihood, besides signifying preference for a normal householder life, has a moral value. Kirat means the labour of the hands, hard and honest work. This is necessarily based on righteousness and excludes exploitation of others.



Vanḍ Chhakṇā

Vanḍ Chhakṇā means sharing with others what one eats or earns. It is the basis of the Sikh institutions of Gurū kā Langar (community kitchen) and Dasvandh (tithe).



Life regulated by this triple principle of meditation, work and social responsibility is, according to Sikhism, the means for an individual to fully realize his potentialities and to contribute towards the continuation and progress of society.

Mirī Pirī

It is the compound of two swords, adopted in the Sikh tradition, to connote the close relationship between the temporal and the spiritual powers. The word 'Mirī' signifies the temporal power and 'Pirī' stands for spiritual authority.

Although the indications of this concept emerged during the times of Gurū Nānak Dev Jī, but on an institutional plane its relation is seen during the times of Gurū Hargobind Sahib. He wore two swords at the time of his installation as the sixth Gurū and constructed Akāl Takht to create awareness among the masses regarding political issues. For this reason, he is known as Mirī Pirī dā Mālik, master of piety as well as power.

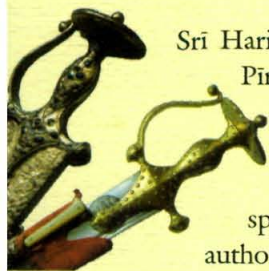
Do talwārā badhiā, ik mir dī ik pīr dī.

Ik azmat dī, ik rāj dī, ik rākhī kare vazīr dī.

Adorned two swords, one of Mirī and other of Pirī.

One for grandeur of temporal rule and
the other for the protection of spirituality.

Srī Harimandar Sāhib and Akāl Takht together illustrate the concept of Mirī and Pirī. The blending of Mirī and Pirī was consummated by Gurū Gobind Singh Jī in the creation of the Khālsā Panth in the manner of saint-soldier; and finally the Khālsā Panth (Mirī) functioning under the guidance of the Divine Word, Srī Gurū Granth Sāhib (Pirī). Gurū Granth Sāhib is the source of spiritual power of the Sikhs whereas Khālsā Panth symbolizes the temporal authority.



Dhādī

'Dhād' is an ancient musical instrument in the shape of a tabor (ḍamrū) which is played with the finger's strokes of the hands. The person playing this instrument is called a Dhādī or a bard. Dhādīs sing ballads full of bravery of great warriors and personalities, to imbibe the spirit of zeal and enthusiasm in the people. They had the support of kings and landlords. To please their masters, these people use to sing ballads of their ancestors.

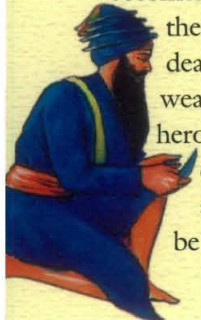
Gurū Sāhib ordained to sing the praise only of the Lord Almighty. Gurū Nānak Dev Jī use to call himself the Lord's Dhādī and composed the ballads addressing the Lord to focus the attention of the humanity towards Him.

Dhādīs enjoy a respectful place in the Sikh tradition. Gurū Hargobind Jī ordained the Dhādīs to sing ballads in front of the Akāl Takht in order to produce zeal and enthusiasm for wars in the Sikh hearts. Abdullā and Natthā were the main minstrels of Gurū Sāhib's time. Nowadays, one can see the Dhādīs singing Gurū's praises at the time of Gurburabs and other historical days.



Nihang

It means the fearless, carefree and not attached to anything. Gurū Arjan Dev Jī while using this word in the same context, states “Nirbhau hoio bhaiā nihangā” - Being fearless, he becomes unrestrained. Gurū Gobind Singh’s army was referred to as the Nihang Singhs or the Gurū’s knights as they are free from the entanglements of the world and fear of death. They are always armed and are usually seen mounted heavily laden with weapons. They are known for the military ambience they still carry about them and the heroic style they continue to cultivate. The term ‘Nihang’ signifies the characteristic qualities of the clan - their freedom from fear of danger or death, readiness for action and non-attachment to worldly possession. The above form of Nihangs could be seen in the eighteenth and nineteenth century until Mahārājā Raṇjīt Singh, about which the Sikhs of the world still feel proud of. Buḍhā (elderly) Dal and Tarunā (young) Dal are their two categories.



Nagārā

Nagārā is believed to be a thunderous musical instrument of war. It is used in the battlefield to indicate the beginning of the war. It could be seen during earlier festivals. Gurū Gobind Singh Jī prepared a drum, which was called ‘Raṇjīt Nagārā’ or ‘drum of victory’ and had used it at the times of wars.

The Nihang Singhs, while moving from one place to another, use to play a Nagārā ahead of their caravan to aware the people of their arrival. Nagārā is used in Gurdwārās on some special occasions and at the time of Ardās.

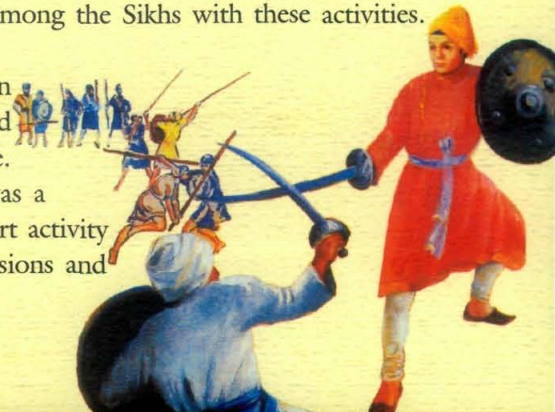


Gatkā

Gatkā is the martial art and a significant sports activity of Khālsā. It keeps them physically fit and strong, and provides excellence in the art of warfare. A long stick of wood is used for this and there is a shield of wood or iron with it. Stick is meant for attack and shield is used for defence. Gurū Hargobind Jī started competitions of Gatkā and physical activities in front of the Akāl Takht in order to expertise the Sikhs in warfare. A feeling of self-confidence, enthusiasm and alertness was built among the Sikhs with these activities. Sikhs also enjoy this activity with Kirpān or sword.

This sports activity acquired a significant part in the Sikh way of life during the times of Gurū Gobind Singh Jī, in order to train them for the art of warfare.

This activity of Gatkā started by Gurū Sahib was a popular sport for a long period. Nowadays, this sport activity of Khālsā could be seen during the times of processions and other Sikh festivals.



Khandā

Khandā has an important place in the Sikh weapons. This two edged weapon is heavier than the sword and is symbolic of power. Nowadays, it is used on top of the Nishān Sāhib. Its importance gained a new height during Gurū Gobind Singh Jī's time, when at the time of creation of Khālsā, it was used to prepare the Amrit, due to which it is called 'Khande kī Pāhul' - rites of two edged dagger.

The extensive use of Khandā by Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Bābā Dīp Singh Jī is famous in the Sikh history. The two edged Khandā symbolizes the twin concepts of Mīrī and Pīrī (temporal and spiritual).

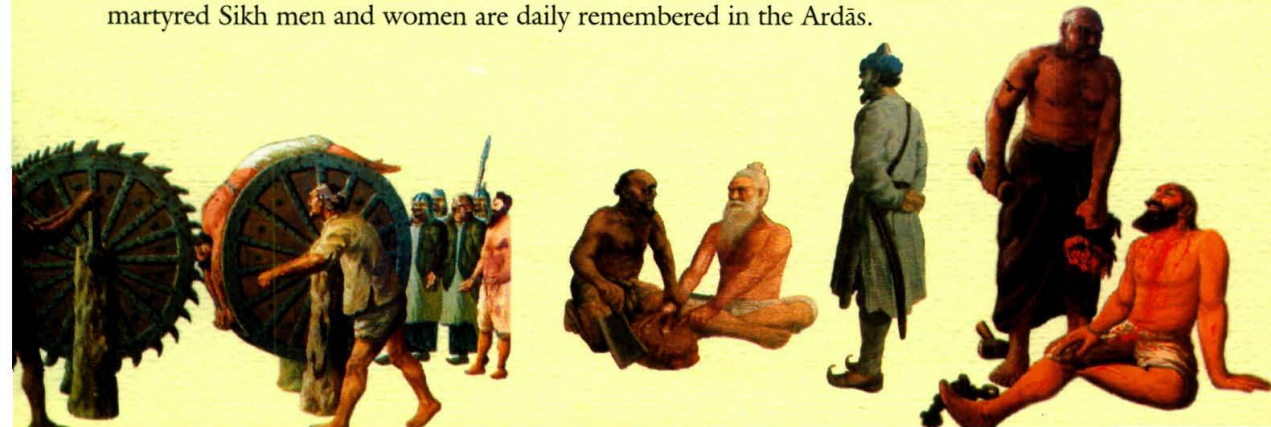
The Khandā, prevalent these days, besides presenting two-edged dagger, also represents the concept of Mīrī-Pīrī. These three encircled in a 'Chakar', a figure without beginning or end, symbolizes an infinite God.



Shahīd

Shahīd or martyr is a treasure of the community, feeling proud of whom one produces zeal and enthusiasm in the next generation. A person who while living in the Lord's Will, walks on the way of truth and sacrifices his life, is called a Shahīd. A martyr is one who sacrifices his life in order to keep the truth (righteous attribute) alive. Shahīd is pardoned of all his or her misdoings. An example of this can be seen at the time of battle of Muktsar where Gurū Gobind Singh Jī embraced the forty Singhs on their returning back and sacrificing their lives in the war. These forty Singhs are known as 'Mukte' or liberated ones.

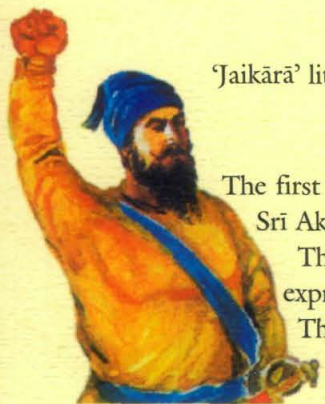
Gurū Arjan Dev Jī was the first martyr in Sikh history, and with his martyrdom started the tradition of martyrs in Sikh tradition. That's why he is known as 'Shahīdā de Sirtāj' (Head of martyrs). Gurū Tegh Bahādar Sāhib attained martyrdom and was known as 'Anchor sheet of Hind'; three more Sikhs attained martyrdom along with him. Further, the entire family of Gurū Gobind Singh Jī attained martyrdom. After the Gurū's period, in the holocausts and Sikh Reform Movements, countless Sikhs attained martyrdom. These martyred Sikh men and women are daily remembered in the Ardās.





Siropā

In the Sikh religion, Siropā or robe of honour is believed to be a symbol of respect and exalted spirit. It has been presented in both spiritual and worldly forms. It is considered as a blessing of Lord upon the devotee at the spiritual plane; while it is used to keep a Sikh in high spirits and to give him respect at a worldly level. Usually, saffron or blue coloured Siropā is prevalent in the historical Gurdwārās. Siropā is presented in the Divine Presence of Gurū Granth Sāhib.



Jaikārā

'Jaikārā' literally means shout of victory or triumph. It is divided into two parts.

Bole so Nihāl.

Sat Sri Akāl.

The first 'Bole so Nihāl' means 'blessed shall be he who shouts' and the other 'Sat Sri Akāl' means 'hail the True and the Timeless One'.

The Jaikārā is recited after Ardās in the dīwān. The Jaikārā or slogan aptly expresses the Sikh belief that all victory belongs to God.

The Jaikārā is used to produce zeal and enthusiasm among the Sikh soldiers and fighters during the wars and constructive activities. The Jaikārā is a symbol of exalted spirit in the Sikhs.

Fateh

Sikhs, on meeting, greet each other with Fateh. It is a form of Sikh salutation, made current amongst the Sikhs by command of Gurū Gobind Singh Ji.

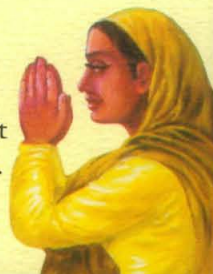
Vāhigurū jī kā khālsā.

Vāhigurū jī kī fateh.

The Khālsā is the Lord's own;

To the Lord is the victory.

Sikhs should exchange this salutation while greeting each other. It strengthens the feeling of humility and brotherhood amongst the Sikhs.



Guideline for the phonetic transcription of Gurmukhī script

V O W E L S

ਅ	ਆ	ਇ	ਈ	ਉ	ਊ
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū
ਏ	ਐ	ਓ	ਔ	ਅੰ	ਆਂ
e	ai	o	au	an/am*	ā**

C O N S O N A N T S

ਕ	ਖ	ਗ	ਘ	ਙ			
k	kh	g	gh [†]	ṅ			
ਚ	ਛ	ਜ	ਝ	ਞ			
ch/c	chh/ch	j	jh [†]	ṇ			
ਟ	ਠ	ਡ	ਢ	ਣ			
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh [†]	ṇ			
ਤ	ਥ	ਦ	ਧ	ਨ			
t	th	d	dh [†]	n			
ਪ	ਫ	ਬ	ਭ	ਮ			
p	ph	b	bh [†]	m			
ਯ	ਰ	ਲ	ਵ	ੜ			
y	r	l	v/w	ṛ			
ਸ	ਹ	ਸ਼	ਕ਼	ਖ਼	ਗ਼	ਜ਼	ਫ਼
s	h	ś/sh	q	kh	gh	z	f

* an/am symbol stands for a homorganic nasal consonant, i.e. the nasal consonant will take the articulatory shape of the following consonant : **n** before velar consonants, **ṇ** before palatal consonants, **ṇ** before retroflex consonants, **ṇ** before alveolar consonants and **m** before bilabial consonants.

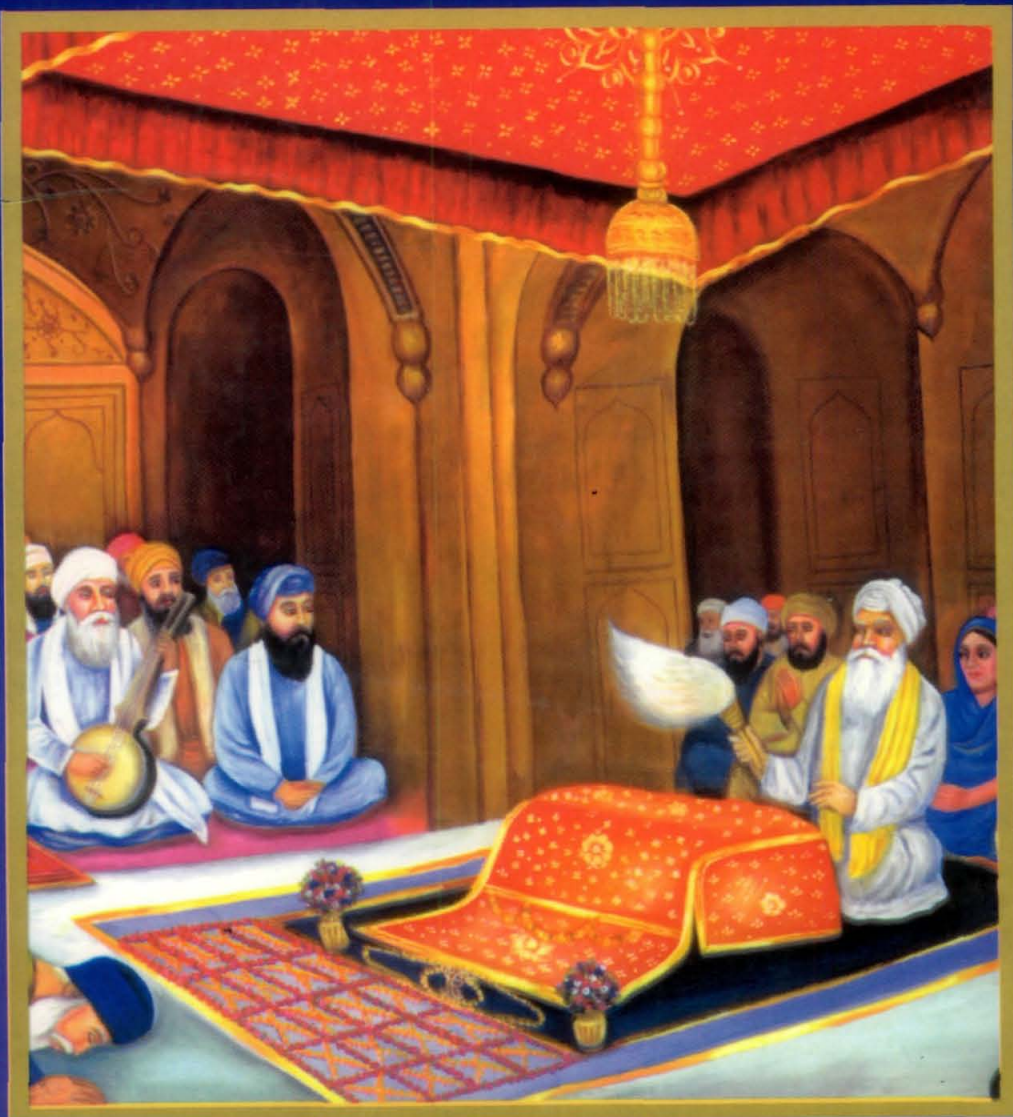
** ā - ā sign over a vowel indicates a nasalised vowel.

† The voiced aspirated stops **gh**, **jh**, **ḍh**, **ḍh** and **bh** are generally articulated as **ká**, **cá**, **ṭá**, **tá** and **pá** with a native accent, respectively, in the word initial position.

Note : A single graphemic consonants like **ਕ** is phonetically perceived as **ਕ+ਅ** (k+a = ka). Hence, this phonetic fact has been represented in all examples. This stream has been followed in this book to quote the Gurbāṇī.

SIKH GURŪS

CONCEPTS AND CULTURE



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